

From Jet to Platinum Jubilee: How Emmett Till Saved My Life, and Why I Speak for Adrianna Younger During Juneteenth 2025

On a hot Mississippi day in 1955, the mutilated body of 14-year-old Emmett Till was pulled from the Tallahatchie River. Days later, Jet Magazine printed the unthinkable: the raw, unfiltered image of his open-casket funeral—an image that shocked the world and galvanized the Civil Rights Movement.

But in one home in Macon, Georgia, that image did something even more personal: it terrified my mother into contemplating the unthinkable. Pregnant, separated from an abusive husband, and Black in the segregated South, my mother saw in Emmett's bloated, disfigured body not just a lynched child, but a prophecy. A warning. A reminder that birthing a Black son in America was an act of radical defiance—or maybe reckless endangerment.

She attempted to abort me, but his mother's courage stayed her hand so I survived. And on April 24, 1958, I was born—three years after Emmett Till's death, and on the same date that would later mark the tragic discovery of 11-year-old Adrianna Younger's body in a Guyanese hotel pool in 2025, her killing allegedly linked to a ritualistic sacrifice.

Today, her legacy lives on through the Adrianna Younger Guyana 4 The Children campaign, led by the Rise Ithiopia Foundation. It is an urgent international call for justice, child protection, and cultural remembrance. Rise Ithiopia Foundation is amplifying Adrianna's story not as a statistic but as a signal—a rallying point for global action.

Seventy years later, on May 25, 2025, the world remembered George Floyd, whose murder in 2020 sparked global protests. His death marked a generational bookend to Emmett Till's. From Till's face in Jet to Floyd's breathless final words captured on a cellphone, the thread of terror remains tightly wound.

What do these three deaths—Emmett, Adrianna, George—tell us?

They tell us that while the tools have changed—print journalism, livestreamed police brutality, and now digital hashtags—the flesh remains vulnerable. They tell us that the myth of Black invincibility is just that: a myth. Our children—our sons and daughters—remain sacrificial lambs on the altar of hate, power, and silence.

But they also tell us something else: that media still matters. That truth, when shown without compromise, still stirs hearts, still changes minds. When Mamie Till-Mobley said, "Let the world see," she didn't know she was setting fire to a generation of dreamers and doers.

I am one of them.

This year, I turn 67. I survived my mother's fear. I survived America's wars on Black children. I survived the silence that follows tragedy. But Adrianna Younger didn't. And that haunts me.

During this Platinum Jubilee of Emmett Till's murder, I refuse to stay silent. I speak for Emmett. I speak for Adrianna. I speak for the frightened women who carry babies they pray won't be born into violence. And I speak for those of us who still believe that media—honest, fearless media—and fearless citizen journalists can make a difference.

Through the leadership of Rise Ithiopia Foundation, Adrianna's voice is not silenced. It is amplified. Her name is etched into the global consciousness—not merely as a victim, but as a catalyst for protection, justice, and healing.

From Jet Magazine to TikTok, from grainy funeral photos to global memorials, the mission remains during this Platinum Jubilee and beyond!:

Let the world see. Let the world remember. Let the world act.

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